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Periodical

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Vol. CCVII
No. 5419

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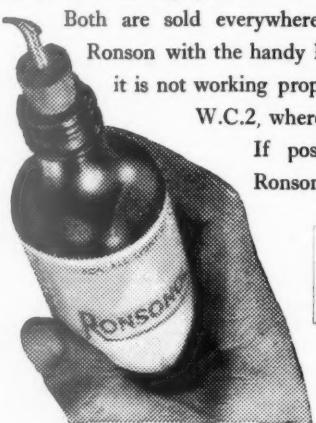
... and all Kayser-Bondor stockings are full-fashioned

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'LIGHTING-FIT'**

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cigarettes for Virginia smokers

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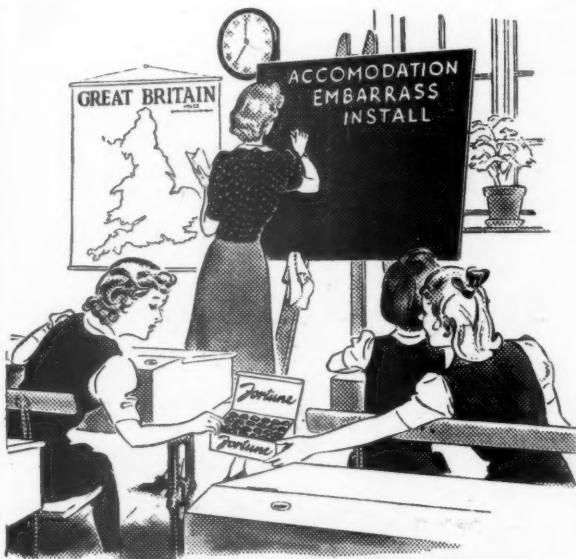
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SHORTBREAD
UNOBTAINABLE
in days of War,
UNRIVALLED
in days of Peace.

FROG
MODEL AEROPLANES
L.B.LTD. London



What is wrong with this picture?

Which is the most glaring mistake here? Surely the fact that the girls have FORTUNE Chocolates. Caley aren't making FORTUNE now—and can't until after the war. The other errors are perhaps not quite so evident. But, look at those desks, aren't they the wrong way round? Doesn't the map show England and Wales only? Would a girls' school be open at 7 o'clock? And the spelling? (Don't expect you'll need any help with that!)

CALEY
CHOCOLATE

* By the way, although FORTUNE Chocolates can't be made until we've a factory of our own again, there's still Norwich Chocolate for you to enjoy.



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if carefully treated:
its name's so well-known there's
no need to repeat it!

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announce that an excellent
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stock of Woollen Fabrics
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Jacqmar
16. GROSVENOR ST. LONDON

November 29 1944



A tight fit

When the village blacksmith shrinks a steel tyre on to a wooden wheel an inch larger than the tyre itself, he is applying the scientific fact that metals expand with heat and contract with cold. The red hot tyre slips on easily, but grips the wheel 'for keeps' when quenched with water. Engineers apply the same principle in reverse. To fix a cylinder liner or a locomotive crank pin so that it cannot move, it is made slightly larger than the hole, shrunk by intense cold, slipped in and allowed to expand at normal temperature. Problem: How to make it cold enough? Answer: Immerse it in a bath of liquid oxygen, the temperature of which is minus 180° Centigrade.

Interesting as it is, this is only one of the minor uses of liquid oxygen. Enormous quantities are delivered daily to steel and engineering works for evaporation into high pressure gas used in the cutting of steel and in the welding of all kinds of metal.

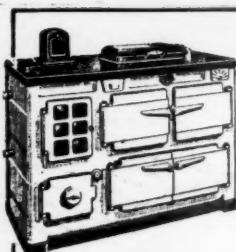
The British Oxygen Co., Ltd., London



Drink
Red Hackle
and banish dull care
SCOTLAND'S BEST WHISKY
HEPBURN & ROSS KELVINGRANGE GLASGOW.



Welcome Always -
Keep it Handy
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Perfect Cooking plus Constant Hot Water

Abundant hot water is as essential to domestic work and well-being as are ease and economy in cooking. This Esse Minor with Water Heater ensures both. For households of 6 to 10. Quickly cleaned, cool in action, and amazingly fuel-saving.

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Nazi-ism destroyed...

We have a home of our own...

... and go back to fresh butter, honey and lovely Crawford's Cream Crackers!

Crawford's
BISCUITS
are good biscuits

WILLIAM CRAWFORD & SONS LTD., EDINBURGH, LIVERPOOL & LONDON



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QUALITY

ZONING RESTRICTS DISTRIBUTION
May conditions soon make KUNZLE Chocolates and Cakes available to all

C KUNZLE LTD., FIVE WAYS, BIRMINGHAM 15

SPA TREATMENT FOR RHEUMATISM

Spa treatment for Rheumatism has been recognised for many years as one of the most satisfactory methods of combating this insidious disease. Even mild attack means pain and reduced working capacity and you should act *at once*, before Rheumatism gets a stranglehold on your system. To-day, a course of treatment at a Spa is out of the question for most people, as neither time nor money can be spared. 'Alkia' Saltrates, however, may be described as a Spa treatment in your own home. It has the essential medicinal properties of seven world-famous Spas and similar beneficial effects as a course of drinking the Spa waters. A teaspoonful of 'Alkia' Saltrates in warm water before breakfast each morning will soon relieve the pain, and, taken regularly, dissolves impurities in the blood stream and eliminates them from the system, thus helping to prevent regular attacks of Rheumatism. A bottle of 'Alkia' Saltrates costs 3/9d., including Purchase Tax. Get a bottle to-day from your chemist and begin your Spa treatment to-morrow morning.

'ALKIA' SALTRATES

Remember
EKO
for
RADIO
and
LAMPS

November 29 1944

PUNCH or The London Charivari



It's a matter of minutes!

Men in a hurry get their overcoats at Moss Bros. because they can be fitted with just what they want in a matter of minutes. They can see the finished job on their backs before they expend the necessary coupons. The wide choice of styles, materials, patterns . . . well, anyway, a great many men buy overcoats at Moss Bros. and all for one good reason or another!

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Corner of King St. & Bedford St., W.C.2
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My regular customers plump for Gilbey's Gin every time. And now the boys from Canada and the U.S. as well as the lads from 'down under' tell me they drink it back home. They all say —

*I'd rather have
GILBEY'S
GIN*



For Indigestion

(or Dyspepsia, as your Doctor might call it) from which even the healthiest people suffer at times, Meggeson Bismuth Dyspepsia Tablets have much to recommend them. They speedily relieve pain, neutralise excess acid and restore stomach balance. Whether your Indigestion is in the form of Flatulence, Heartburn, or general Stomach Discomfort, two of these Tablets taken after the meal



(you suck them like sweets) will prevent distress.

At the same time, the breath is sweetened and more benefit is derived from the meal. Meggeson Bismuth Dyspepsia Tablets may be obtained from qualified chemists only, price 1/6 and 3/0 inc. tax.

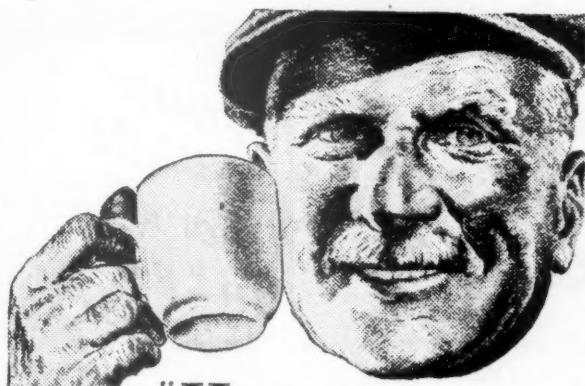
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tyres depend on you?"

OLD HENTY TALKS TO TRANSPORT EXECUTIVES

"Your job is to deliver the goods. Sounds simple doesn't it, when you say it quickly? But only you know how really difficult it can be these days. There are so many 'do's and don'ts' which seem to get in the way. Take tyre-care for example. No one knows better than you that tyres don't grow on trees any more. Yet you must still keep to your time schedules. There will

always be those last minute extra loads, which just have to go. Small wonder you sometimes find yourself telling a driver not to worry about overloads and speeding. But what happens when you do this? Not only are the tyres affected but so is the driver. If you make him do something he knows is bad for his tyres, you are really partly to blame if he commits other tyre crimes."

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REMEMBER SPODE

A Great Name in
Good China



CHINESE ROSE

"We plan to resume production of this design after the war."

Spoode

The China of Distinction

W. T. COPELAND & SONS LIMITED
SPODE WORKS, STOKE-ON-TRENT

Always ready to serve ...



Baked Beans — Soups — Salad Cream — Mayonnaise
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HEINZ
57 Varieties

What a boon it is to the soldier, sailor and airman—to have piping-hot food always at hand! That is what the Heinz Self-Heating can brings to him. Millions of these ingenious strength-reviving cans are giving goodness and comfort to our men—your men, perhaps—in their hardships. So, if Heinz at home is in short supply, well, you know why, and won't mind!



You haven't experienced the luxury of the perfect shave unless you've used a Laurel—made from Sheffield's finest steel by Sheffielders in the home of the cutting edge.

1½
INCLUDING PURCHASE TAX

Made by
George Lawrence Ltd.
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LAUREL
THE GOOD-TEMPERED SHEFFIELD BLADE

CVS-21

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They are the home of HARRIS TWEED

For generations the making of Harris Tweed has been the pride and chief industry of the men and women of these Islands.

The matchless texture of Harris Tweed (of virgin Scottish wool), its great durability, its variety of design and colour, continue to find increasing fame and favour wherever quality is recognised and "character" appreciated.



See the mark on the cloth; see the label on the garment; then you know it is Harris Tweed.



Issued by THE HARRIS TWEED ASSOCIATION LTD.



FOUR SQUARE is still made, as ever, from pure tobacco—matured and mellowed by ageing in the wood; free from artificial scents and flavouring.

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PUNCH

OR

THE LONDON CHARIVARI

Vol. CCVII No. 5419



November 29 1944

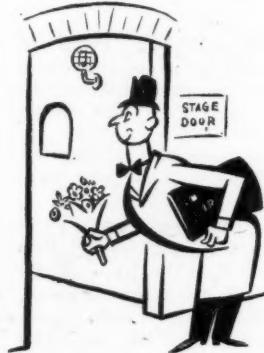
Charivaria

ANOTHER Nazi emissary is on his way to Japan. He has taken a batch of rebuff papers to be signed.

○ ○

When embarrassed, a Japanese smiles instead of blushing, we are told. This causes a rush of teeth to the face.

○ ○



"What has become of the Wehrmacht?" asks a military commentator. As far as we can remember, Himmler had it last.

○ ○

A British singer is said to receive an income of £70,000 from concerts, gramophone records, broadcasts and films. She is the Sweetheart of the Inland Revenue Department.

○ ○

A correspondent wonders if the serial story will again be a feature of the daily newspaper after the war. Meanwhile there's always the current instalment of the easement of the Fire Guard regulations.

○ ○

It is doubtful whether Wehrmacht officers will take much notice of Himmler's decree that they should co-operate with each other in the true spirit of Nazism. At any rate they haven't begun shooting each other yet.

○ ○

APARTMENTS WANTED

WTD., suitable accom. for upwards of 100 pigs, within 6 miles Cheltenham, rent or purchase."

Advt. in Gloucestershire paper.

With bath?

○ ○

The B.B.C. announces that it is just five years since it started broadcasting early-morning exercises. We felt that much older right at the start.



Critics of the Government's longevity see in the ice-cream order a transparent move to catch the 1960 vote at the next election.

○ ○

"Gales are sweeping over Greece, but the inhabitants don't seem to mind," says a war correspondent. It must be nice to get the place aired now the guests have gone.

○ ○

"9 Pure R.I.R. Hens, 18s. each; Sundays only."

Advt. in Yorks paper.

The hypocrites!

○ ○

There is a move afoot to attract American tourists to Britain after the war. Otherwise the place will seem quite strange to us.

○ ○



Two farmers in the interior of Brazil had never heard of Hitler. That's much longer than we haven't heard of him.

○ ○

Teetotallers regard it as a triumph for their cause that the Government has granted permission for ice-cream to be manufactured but not beer.

○ ○

A famous Hollywood film actress is unmarried. It was a quiet affair, just a few lawyers and personal friends being present.

○ ○

"The British public does not like change," says a writer. Or else it is simply afraid of conductresses.

○ ○

Current newspaper reports suggest that now the farmers have got the weather back they still don't like it.

A Moderate Abstainer

I WAS looking at my book-shelves and trying to count the number of books I had lost recently when I noticed a volume written by one of my great-uncles, and which I had never read—no, that is not true. The fact that I had never read a book written by one of my great-uncles would not have moved me at all. What took my fancy was the title.

It was called quite simply:

NINETEEN CENTURIES OF DRINK IN ENGLAND A HISTORY

The author had the letters D.C.L., LL.D., F.S.A., after his name. He chose a difficult task, but I think he did justice to his theme. He was evidently not a teetotaller, but he believed in temperance, in a moderate use, as he would describe it, of the gifts which have been bestowed on us by Heaven. He has listed three hundred and fifty-nine authorities in his prefatory pages, ranging from Aelfric's *Homilies of the Anglo-Saxon Church* to *Merry Jests of Old Hobson the Londoner*, from the Mabinogion to the *Toxicologist's Guide*. He has neglected no poet, no essay-writer, no saint, no chronicler, no legend, no custom, no law. Even the alphabetical index thoughtfully provided at the end has the quality of a rare stimulant. *Benedictine, Bentley, Beowulf, Berkeley, Betony, Beveridge Bishop* begin the letter "B," and one observes under "M" *Macaulay Lord, Mad Dog, Malmsey, Malt-worms, Marlowe and Marmion*.

But the queer thing is that my great-uncle has a plot for his book. He is willing to admit that "the English in their long wars with the Netherlands learnt to drown themselves in immoderate drinking," but he refuses to believe that "in those wars, they first learnt such excess." The habit, he thinks, was a thousand years older than this, and he stands with St. Boniface, who wrote to Cuthbert "This is an evil peculiar to pagans and our race. Neither the Franks, nor the Gauls, nor the Lombards, nor the Romans, nor the Greeks commit it."

His general idea is, in fact, that the Ancient Britons took little but barley mead and apple wine. Led astray, however, by the large potations of the Romans, corrupted by the immoderate ale-drinking of the Saxons, fuddled by the further toping of the Danes, drenched by the Normans and Plantagenets with every variety of bad wine from France and the Mediterranean littoral, besotted by imitation sherry and port, half-submerged in brandy and champagne, floating in seas of rum, and finally indulging in orgies of whisky and synthetic gin, they have found it very hard at the end of nearly two thousand years to remain fundamentally sober.

He makes out a strong case, especially against "doctored" wines. He quotes, for instance, the following early-nineteenth-century recipe for port from a "wine" guide:

"Take of good cider 4 gallons; of the juice of red beet 2 quarts; logwood 4 oz.; rhatan root brewed $\frac{1}{2}$ a pound; first infuse the logwood and rhatan root in brandy and a gallon of cider for a week; then strain off the liquor and mix the ingredients; keep in cask for a month, when it will be fit to bottle"—

and he points out that in 1812, 135 pipes and 20 hogsheads of port were landed from Portugal in Guernsey, while in the same year Guernsey shipped to London over 2,545 pipes of what purported to be the same fluid.

He is no Puritan, my great-uncle; and indeed, the

Commonwealth seems to be the only period of English intoxication that he has omitted from a book which, after dealing with the Britons and the Romans, narrates with some gusto the story of Hengist and Vortigern. Hengist, as I dare say you know, and my great-uncle certainly believed, filled Vortigern so full of strong ale that the wretched Briton accepted Hengist's daughter as the price of the Kingdom of Kent, and so from bad to worse our rough island story ran on.

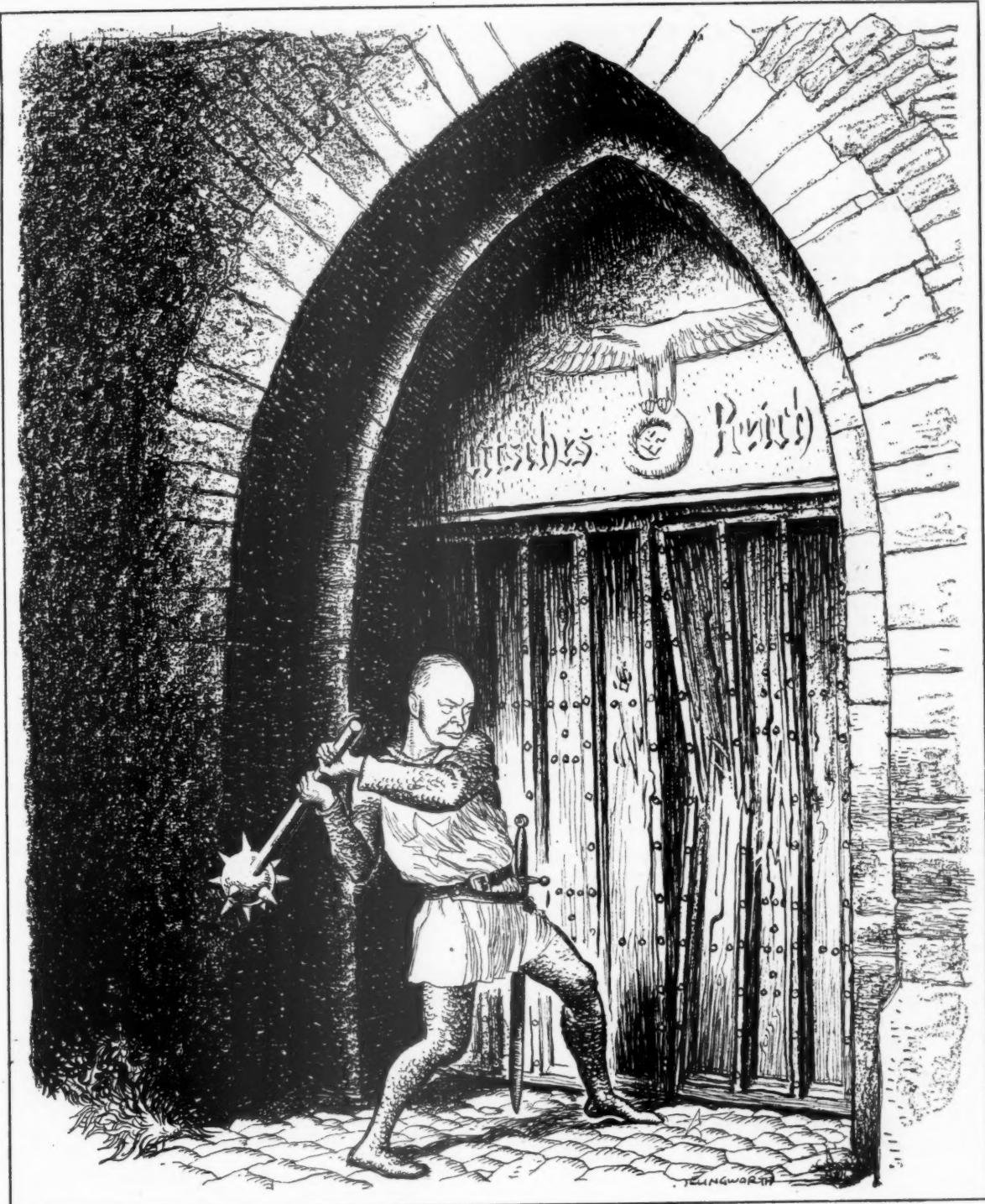
But I cannot help observing a note of what I can only call unwilling admiration in my great-uncle's indictment of his native land. He seldom shirks detail, and whenever a king, a bishop, a poet, or a novelist has taken a firm stand against the demon alcohol, my great-uncle seldom fails to point out that the preacher himself has not been immune from commerce with the fiend. There are moments when I feel that it is the way our rough island stomachs have endured the enemy that has partly inspired my great-uncle to undertake his monumental work. For a man who, whenever he remembers it, inveighs against drunkenness, he shows a remarkable lack of bias, theological or otherwise, and the fact that he strongly disapproves of Bishop Still's well-known poem which begins:

"I cannot eat but lytle meate"
does not prevent him from quoting it in full. Scenes of revelry over soured logwood and betony seem to have a sort of fascination for him. I must assume that he was a "stout" Anglican, yet he deals thus with King Philip of Spain.

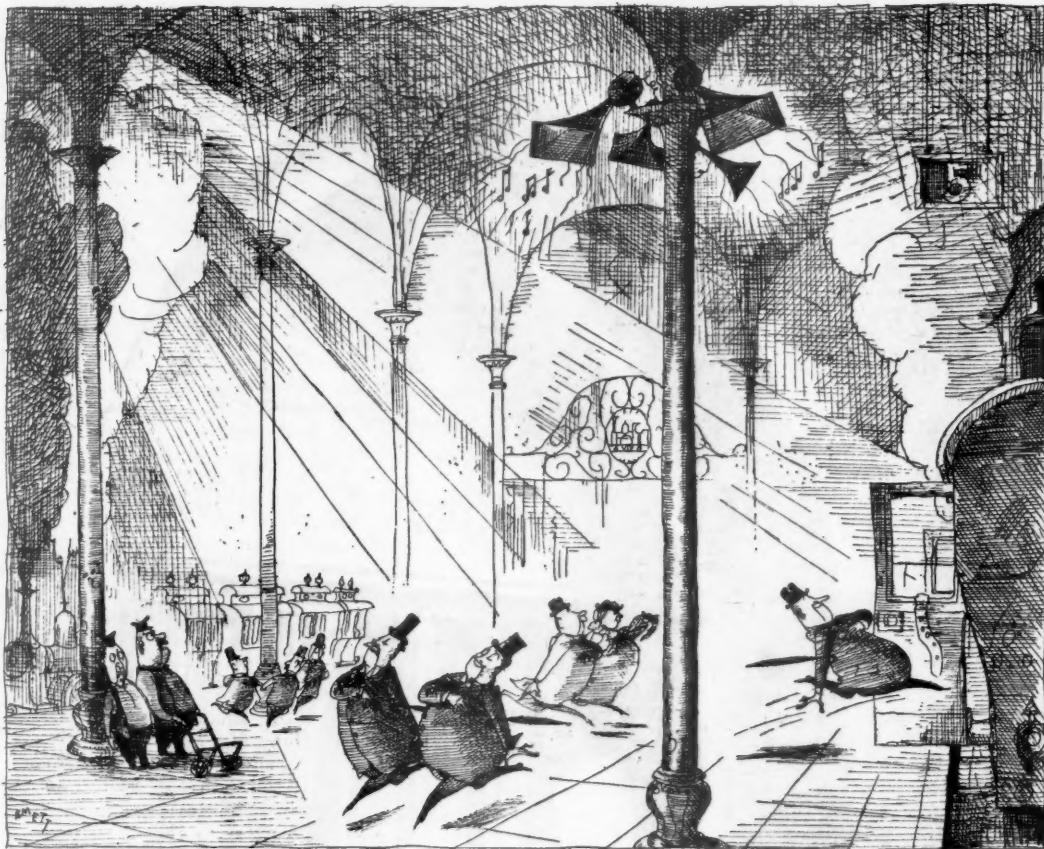
"The Consort of Queen Mary soon found out the favourite English drink. Philip courted popularity. He gave it out that he had come to England to live like an Englishman, and in proof thereof drank some ale for the first time at a public dinner, gravely commanding it as the wine of the country. Queen Mary, at the time of the Coronation, was single, so Philip missed the usual pageant, the running of the conduits at Cornhill and Cheapside with wine, and the oration at St. Paul's School of Heywood, the Queen's favourite poet. . . . The pastoral visit of Bishop Ridley to Queen Mary reminds me of a curious feature of Old English hospitality, that of drinking before leaving. Persons of quality were taken into the cellar for a draught of ale or wine fresh from the cask, as was the Duke of Buckingham into Wolsey's cellar. . . . Ridley was introduced to the cellar by Sir Thomas Wharton the steward of the household. When he had drunk, he said he had done wrong to drink under a roof where God's Word was rejected."

A pleasant anecdote, but the timing of Bishop Ridley's remark leaves a curious doubt in my mind as to whether the prelate was speaking in the character of a gourmet or a divine.

Nor do I discover the verbal castigation that I should have expected when he tells us how Dunstan dragged King Edwy back into the dining hall to go on drinking mead with his guests, or when Lord Holland is quoted as saying that at the wedding of King George IV "the Prince had drunk so much brandy that he could scarcely be kept upright between two dukes." The zeal of the antiquarian appears, in fact, to have submerged very often my great-uncle's ardour for reform. But if any reader wishes to know more about "Humpty-Dumpty," "Clamber Clown," "Old Pharoah," "Hugmatee," "Stitchback," "Three Threads," "Mum," and "Knock-me-down," or to understand the effects on the revenue and the habits of the



IKE'S WAY



"... 'Dance of the Sugar-plum Fairy' again!"

people, caused by the taxes on this or that form of alcohol, since the time of Ethelred the Unready, or to learn about bid-ale, bride-ale, church-ale, clerk-ale, Easter-ale, Scot-ale, and weddyn-ale, he will be well advised to ask for my great-uncle's book. It was published in 1884 and for some reason or other the writer saw faint gleams of hope for the future.

He was a rector and a rural dean. He only claims to be the author of one other book. This is called *The History of Toasting*. I do not possess it. I wish I did. I surmise that it was a furious polemic written in his ardent youth. *Nineteen Centuries of Drink* I take to be the riper product of a mellower and maturer mind. It would have surprised him a little to know that the English stomach would survive two more long wars in the Netherlands during the next sixty years.

EVOE.

• •

"When injected in the eye it makes the retina perceive ultra-red rays, and enables a night-flyer to sight an enemy plane in the darkness at a distance three times shorter than had hitherto been possible."—*Agency report*.

Hardly worth it, surely—just at the moment of impact?

Said the Soldier

WHEN I return from the East,"
Said the soldier,
"They say I'll feel the cold,
But I shan't care
If Stow's still there—
If Stow's still there on the Wold."

"When I come back from the East,"
Said the soldier,
"The north wind may be harsh,
But I shan't mind
If I can find
Moreton still in the Marsh."

"When I come home from the East,"
Said the soldier,
"It'll like as not be snowing,
But that's naught to me
If I can see
The River Windrush flowing."

A. W. B.

The Grass-Widower's Kitchen Pad

JAMES rolled some murderous-looking fish-cakes off the pan and we sat down at his kitchen table to play ourselves in for another day.

"You were going to give me the address of the man who sold you those elastic braces," I said, reaching for a pad on the dresser. "May I tear a bit off this?"

James half rose in his chair and gulped. "You may not!" he cried. "Those pages shall never be sullied by so much as a whiff of elastic braces. What you are privileged to hold in your hand is a manuscript which will one day be famous."

I opened it at random and read:

"SIR,—Have given the lawndryman the rough side of my tungs pore fish. Have allso peeled enough potaytoes for two. Emily is back at school. A robbin has been on the coakshed all morning.

P. M."

A note followed in James's hand:

"I made friends with him (the robin) last Sunday. Very glad about Emily. Would you please make certain the scullery light is turned off when you go?"

Then:

"SIR,—I think it is a mail bird. Could you do with some pigs trotters tomorrow as Mister Bellchambers is killing. Georges stomach is off again. Whatever was you cooking larst night as had to clean pan with a chizzel. Will see to scullery light. P. M."

"I take it these are not Cabinet minutes," I said. "Who is P. M.?"

"Mrs. Mewtimer," James explained. "Mrs. Polly Mewtimer, my rusher-in. And a very remarkable woman."

"She must have courage, at least, to clear up after you," I murmured, looking round at the high-piled greasy chaos which attended James's cooking.

"These daily notes of ours are not only the stark revelation of two human souls," James went on, "but a slice of social history. For one of the most interesting things about this war is that it has turned London into a vast camp of grass-widowers, who all keep kitchen-pads on which they correspond with some woman they have probably never seen. Just look at this:

"SIR,—Very sorry I knock dicannter against sink. Your hollyhoks are a treat mine only up to Georges chin. Have put bit of hake in fridge as we got to much.

P. M."

And at that:

"SIR,—Have turned out studdy it was like a pigsstie. Very glad your Missis cuming for weekend dear. I wunder will she think it tidy enough. Changed towerls. I saw date with the gods larst night. He is ever so soppy, but she is lovely alright. Shall I bring a sheepshart Tuesday.

P. M."

"What's she like?" I asked.

"No idea," said James. "I go too early and come home too late. I inherited her from the people next door when they were doodlebugged, and all they told me was she was a jewel and her husband was eaten by lions."

"Lions?"

"Well, they were in a great hurry to get away and it may easily have been tigers. It was something hungry and Asiatic. I see her as middle-aged, with a good deal of the acid of experience in her face, in black taffeta."

"And a herbaceous border round her hat," I suggested.

"Maybe," James admitted. "As a matter of fact, I'm worried about her. There's been an undercurrent in her letters lately that I haven't liked."

"They're still human," I said, reading from the pad:

"SIR,—Have took liberty of asking Mister Timms for new washer for hot tap. I wunder are you the fat cricketer in that photograph upstairs or the skinnie one.

P. M."



"Now let this discussion on Demobilization and Social Security be a lively one, with a spirited interplay of ideas, even if we have to be a half-minute late for tea."

James winced slightly. "Yes, they're still human, and she's still absurdly generous. That delicious cow's-heel we had last night was Mewtimer bounty."

"Oh, that delicious cow's-heel?" I echoed, falsely.

"I don't think I've done anything to offend her."

"You don't think it could be the copy of *Lady Chatterley* I see on the hall-table?"

"That's only *Lady Chatterley's* cover. We always keep the *A.B.C.* in it."

"There's certainly an air of abstraction about these later letters," I said, reading.

"For one thing, nature has dropped out, which is frightfully unlike Mewtimer. When was the last nature note?"

"Three weeks ago, when she wrote:

"SIR,—Am giving all them emty bottols to the Vicker for his sail. The milk has got a new horse. It is a nice round horse.

P. M."

"George's stomach is O.K., and Emily is doing well. It beats me," said James unhappily. "But something's up."

Just then the area bell pealed loudly. James went cursing to the door and revealed a horrible dawn; in addition a girl of, say, twenty-five whom it was a real pleasure to consider. Round her hair she had a bright handkerchief. James brought her in, apologizing for our shirt-sleeves and for the relics of supper.

"I ought to be hardened to those," said the girl. "So you are the fat cricketer?" And she laughed.

"Mrs. ——" James spluttered.

"Mewtimer. But only till eleven o'clock. After that I'll be Mrs. Timms. That's why I've come along early so as to get you straight first."

"This—this is a very great occasion," James declared, in the kind of voice usually reserved for opening the batting from the Front Bench on something no lighter than Gold or Flogging.

"I've been ever so worried," she said. "He's been pestering me so. But now I've said yes it's all sunshine. I'll just run up and get the beds done while you're finishing." And she went upstairs two at a time.

"Well, I'll be damned!" James exclaimed angrily.

"Before we go into that," I said, "I insist on being given the address of the man who sold you those elastic braces."

ERIC.

The Best Words in the Wrong Order

SPARROWS, dust-bathing in the pulverized brick on the bomb-chipped window-ledge above, shook down some crumbs on to Cogbottle's hat. He took it off and brushed it with his hand, but all he said was "A friend of mine rang me up the other day to say that he had been to see the film *The Mask of San Demetrio*."

Upfoot looked up at the ledge, down at the hat, and intermediately at Cogbottle's expression. "So what?" he said.

"Well," said Cogbottle, replacing his hat, "can you tell me what film it was he had been to see?"

"Oh," Upfoot said. "Ah. Well—either *The Mask of Dimitrios* or *San Demetrio, London*."

"Exactly. But suppose he'd gone on, without waiting to clear up that little matter, to declare that the principal player in the picture, without naming him, had—"

"Wait a minute," Upfoot said. "Do you mean to say that you couldn't have got it by deduction? Where does this chap live?"

"I see your point. You mean I should have got out an evening paper, run a finger down the columns of suburban cinema programmes, found all the places that were showing one of the two pictures and all that were showing the other, collated this information with my pocket map of the environs of London, and reached the conclusion that my friend's house was so much nearer to one of the films as to make the odds on his having seen that one greater than the odds on his having seen the other, just in time," said Cogbottle, "to find that he'd hung up."

"Alternatively you could have asked him which he meant."

"As I did."

"Well, then, what in the name of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—"

"I merely quoted the incident," said Cogbottle, "as a peg for discussion."

Upfoot brightened. "Discussion of what? Malapropisms?"

"Not exactly. There's a difference—"

"Because if you want Malapropisms," Upfoot said, "come to me. Only the other day I heard a man in a restaurant praise what he called the pickled wallflowers."

"This wasn't exactly a Malapropism—there's a difference between the—And by the way," said Cogbottle, interrupting himself against his better judgment, "that example of yours wasn't a real Malapropism either. It was just a slip of the tongue, or an intentional crack. Nobody would say wallflower when he meant walnut and really not notice it."

"So you say a Malapropism has got to be, well, believed in?"

"Certainly."

"People who say they caught something during a severe hypodermic and were cured by having an epidemic injection have got to be ready to defend their words?"

"Well—"

"People who talk about Hansard and Gretel—"

"I don't believe in all these people," Cogbottle interrupted briskly. "Anyway you can never exactly get Malaprops to defend their mistakes. If you say anything they just get uneasy and resentful. It's simply that they're constitutionally unable to think at all in a detached way about the words they use. They can't think about words or the construction of phrases. Speech comes out of them in a flow, like bird-song, when the appropriate

stimulus is applied; they don't listen to what they say, they simply wind up with the consciousness that they've made some statement to some particular effect."

"Well, I should hope so," Upfoot said. "If you want to do them out of the consciousness of that—"

"I don't want to do them out of anything, least of all . . ."

An enormous paper-lorry thundered past. Cogbottle went on talking and when he became audible again he was finishing his sentence, a good deal to Upfoot's surprise, with the words ". . . what I once heard described as 'a most cruelly witty article in the *Church Times*.'"

Playing for safety, Upfoot said "Well—"

"Did you ever read *War and Peace*?" Cogbottle asked abruptly.

"You mean the old peasant who didn't realize he was using interesting phrases," said Upfoot. "Yes, yes."

"Oh," said Cogbottle. "Yes. Er—" He cogitated for a little, trying to think of something that he would be able to explain to Upfoot; but short as the interval was, it was long enough for him to lose the initiative. Upfoot said—

"I once heard a woman say her husband was a terrible clinic."

Cogbottle gave an incredulous grunt. Upfoot said "I once heard a man say he liked to listen to cinema-organisms."

When Cogbottle grunted again, Upfoot said "I once heard a speaker at a public banquet open his address with the words 'I am deeply inebriated to you.'"

"Oh, come," Cogbottle said; but Upfoot insisted: "It was only last week that the woman in my tobacconist's said her husband came home from Egypt with his leg in piastre-of-Paris and was coalescing in hospital."

"You lie in your teeth," said Cogbottle, stung.

Upfoot observed, "It's as good a place as any."

R. M.

o o

Baltic Fancy

OVER the white water the towers and spires are hailing:
"Come to the dancing steeples of Stralsund!"

But I lie and stretch, idle, watching the cream flecks
sailing;

Flat on the hot silver-sand, heeding the seamews wailing.

"Plenty of time, O steeples of Stralsund!"

Over the dim cloisters the fiery green roofs are gleaming.

"Come, for the bells are swinging in Stralsund!"
Wherefore leave the island, where ploughland and strand
are dreaming?

This side 'tis the cattle, not women and men, a-teaming.

"You keep the people, steeples of Stralsund!"

Under the green chestnuts the winnowy airs are playing.

"Come to the goodman's vespers in Stralsund!"
Only men a-tugging them mind what the bells are saying;
Bells in vain maintaining that going is better than staying.

"Leave me this evening, steeples of Stralsund!"

Parcels

I AM feeling rather pleased with myself at the moment because this morning I posted his silver-backed hair-brush to Major Gauntly of 2992 African Garrison Company. I have been carrying it round with me for six weeks, ever since the batman packed it up with my stuff and left him with my ordinary black one. Captain Sympson and I often find queer things in our kit, because as travelling Welfare Officers we are constantly moving from Company to Company, and sharing tents with strange officers.

If it is a mere matter of leaving behind a bottle of aspirins and gaining a packet of cigarettes, or getting the wrong water-bucket, or somebody else's sheet, we just cry quits, and no correspondence ensues. But if it is anything important—such as Colonel Kew's upper denture—we return it as soon as possible. Luckily it was Sympson who gained the denture, or Colonel Kew would have had to live on soya links for a long time, because one of my weaknesses is a strong distaste for sending off parcels. Some people are the same about writing letters. They keep their beloved ones at home in an agony of apprehension for months on end because they have not the energy to write a few words on a bit of paper, stick it in an envelope, seal it up, and post it. Sheer laziness.

Parcels are quite different, and much more complicated. First of all you have to find brown paper, and then you have to find string, and then you have to find the article that you meant to put inside the parcel, only to discover that your kit is again all packed ready to move on. So you throw away the string and the brown paper, and next time you find the silver-backed hair-brush or whatever it is you want to send you cannot find any string, so you steal a lace out of somebody else's spare boots and then there is no paper, so you give the whole thing up until you are feeling stronger.

Then, at long last, you manage to get the thing tied up, only to find that the note you meant to stick inside apologizing for the incident is lying on your bed. You try to undo the knots, but in the end have to cut the string, and when you try to tie the parcel up again you find the string is too short and in some mysterious way the paper has also become smaller.

At the next attempt, some days later, you get the parcel tied up and the letter inside, but when you try to

write the address on it you find the brown paper is glazed and will not accept ink. So you try to get hold of a sticky label, but there are none, so you use a piece of paper and glue, and you foolishly stick the paper on before writing the address, so that when you address it the ink runs and the whole thing becomes indecipherable. When eventually it is legibly addressed you have to take it to the post office at least three times. The first time they refuse it because you have forgotten to put the Censor stamp on it, and the second time because they say that it is not properly tied up.

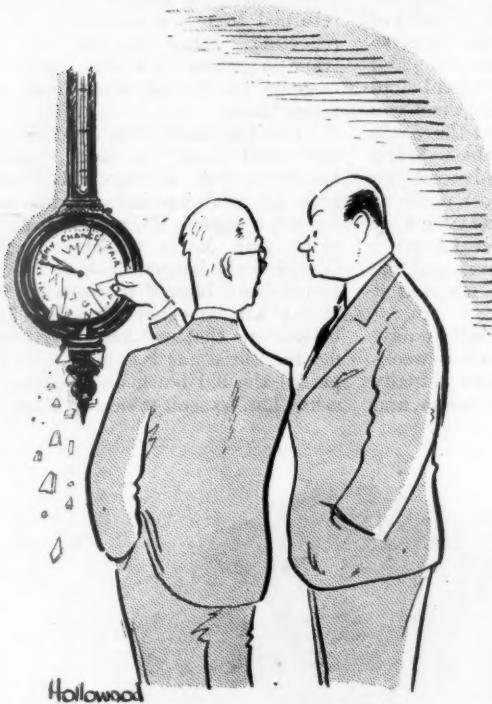
I was pleased with myself to-day, however, because after several weeks of this sort of effort I had actually posted off the silver-backed brush, and

enclosed a note saying that I would be glad to have my ordinary black brush returned to me in exchange. I was reflecting rather happily on this triumph when Sympson came in, mopped his heated brow, and sank into a chair.

"I've just walked right to the post office and back," he said, "quite a hundred yards. I've got rid of a silly little job that has been on my mind for some time. When we spent the night with Major Gauntly at 2992 Company the batman foolishly packed an old black-backed hair-brush of his in my kit, and left him the silver-backed one that my Aunt Myrtle sent me for Christmas last year. So I've posted the old black one to him and asked him to send mine on to me."



" . . . So now they've relaxed all the street-lighting restrictions of the last five years, and they've gone back to the time when most of the London boroughs had no street lighting whatever."



"Looks like being an extremely hard winter, doesn't it?"

Silk to the Waaf

(It is announced that members of the Waaf may wear silk stockings.)

AIR-GIRLS, give ear. Let every Waaf attend.
Great is the news I bring.
Unless I err, this is the sort of thing
To give you cheer and buck you up no end.
A cloud has rolled away
And brightlier shines the day;
In short, your legs may now be silken clad.
Is not that news? I'll say it is, by gad.

Why this dear boon has been withheld so long
I'm not aware.
Herein undoubtedly you suffered wrong.
Both Wrens and Ats
(The cats)
Have aye endued their limbs in this appeal.
Only the stubborn rulers of the air
Said No, and stuck thereto.
Haply they feared th' effect would be too much
And have a weakening touch
On our susceptible young fliers, who
Seeing an ankle neat and trim
And silken limb
Might grow unsteady,
And have, in fact, quite enough of that sort of thing
already.

Plausible, I admit;
One can't be sure, but possibly that's it.

But how so full a miracle was wrought
Methinks would seem
Fair matter for a poet's dream;
Let us take thought.
I see the men in judgment, dark and stern,
With glooming frown
Prepared once more to turn the matter down,
Save one dissentient, sole among his peers
(A lad, mayhap), who brightly fills their ears
With richest praise of silken legs; but that
Is just the detail that they're jibbing at.
So, too, the discontent that silk would heal,
Though passionately urged, is met with steel.
But is he beaten? No.
He has another go,
And fires the timeless gun, Esprit de Corps.
"The Ats and Wrens," he cries aflame,
"Though plainer, put our Waafs to shame,
And shall this hurt be borne,
Our vestals be less elegantly dight?
Never." He sate, and laughed the thing to scorn.

* * * * *

His brethren bared the head, and said "All Right."
DUM-DUM.

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H. J.'s Dramatic Fragments

I WENT into the park and wrote the next Fragment as a relief from the nervous tension caused by the reappearance of one whom I had long hoped to be beyond recall. Her name was Lucia Speinglawn and a dark chapter in my life is what she was, being a by-passed flame of mine and dating from the time I was a young man in lodgings and had the loudest tenor in Denmark Hill. She called on us with a dachshund and twins and displayed pictures of her husband, whose job was being turned into a bowl of crayfish by a conjurer. On and on she talked, with my wife loudly inquiring what I had ever seen in her and B. Smith repeatedly referring to her triplets. Things got even worse when she began to loose reminiscences of how we had jointly operated a two-handed fretsaw and constructed a barometer for her mother, aneroid being what this instrument was, so that all in all it was a relief when the music box slipped out of control again and we had an excuse for leaving to spend the night with friends in accordance with our usual arrangement.

PURPLE SNOW : A TALE OF FOREIGN PARTS (The scene is an Old Boys' Dinner.)

TOASTMASTER. Chaps, the toast before the House is "The Old School" and Higgs J. will propose it.
HIGGS J. My friends, we have come to the crossroads . . .
TOASTMASTER. It's "The Old School," not "Education."
HIGGS J. Sorry. On this festive occasion, which of us does not drop a silent tear to think of the happy hours we spent when young?

SUB-PAYMASTER ATKINS. I don't, for one. When I weep, I weep loudly, but even a meal like this is enough to prevent my weeping at all.
HIGGS J. That is just a matter of detail. The Old



"Sorry, Sir—we haven't a suit in the place."

School is what we are always thinking of, at least on occasions like this. So much for that. I am reminded of a story of two quantity surveyors who were visiting their chiropodist.

LORD BRILL. Reminded by whom? Give us the blighter's name.

HIGGS J. One said to the other, "Who do you think will win the Derby?" And like a flash came the reply, "The horse that comes in first."

AN AMBASSADOR. The introduction to this anecdote leaves my appetite unwhetted.

TOASTMASTER. I think from his expectant expression that he must have completed it. We'd better have the toast at once. (*For a moment drinking drowns all other sounds.*) It is now my painful duty to call upon the Headmaster to reply.

HEADMASTER. Mr. President: Herodotus, with whom I am sure you are all familiar (*pause*) . . . with whom . . . well, perhaps I had better come to my report. During the year forty boys passed the School Certificate in various subjects, sixty took the Common Entrance Examination to other schools and T. Harper was accepted as a Commoner by the Society of Pass Students, Oxford. In athletics as in scholarship our star has shone bright and 138 goals have been scored on the school playing fields during the winter season. The manifold activities of our community have continued with unabated zest and the substitution of boots for plimsolls has proved a land-mark in the history of the Corps. On All Hallows' Eve the choir delighted those who found it possible to attend with selections from *The Geisha* arranged by Miss Hepplewhite for massed male voices, while only five days later we were fortunate enough to have a lecture from an Old Boy, Jack Hedge, on "How to Detect a Flaw

in a Lease." I now wish to take this opportunity of expressing my gratitude to . . .

SUB-PAYMASTER ATKINS. Not to "Rozzer" Brown. We won't stand for that. He confiscated a jar of my fish-paste in '96. I wasn't eating it at all, only smelling it.

ALDERMAN POUNCE. And if you think you're going to get a clap for "Hammy" Barker, think again.

TOASTMASTER. I move the closure.

OMNES. We second it.

TOASTMASTER. The company will now hear an Archdeacon, who wishes to remain anonymous, solicit your potations for, of all people, the Governors.

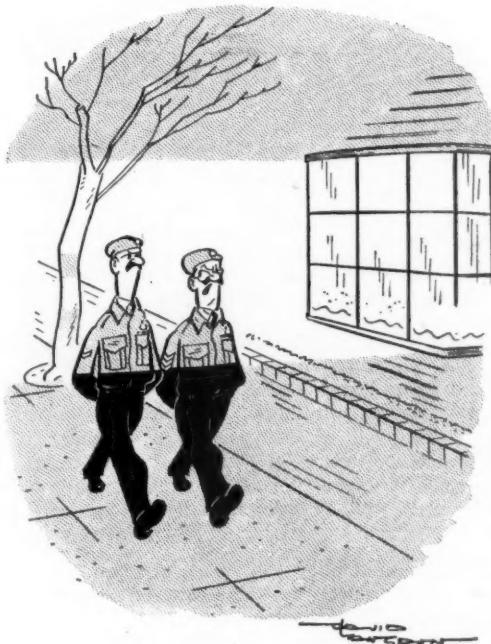
ARCHDEACON. It is now sixty-five years since I quitted for the last time the buildings we know so well. Things were indeed different in those days. School started at 4 A.M., and as there was no lighting we did mental arithmetic until sunrise. We played rugger with a hard ball and fisticuffs were prevalent. It was nothing unusual to see a whole form sitting at their lessons holding raw beef-steaks to their eyes. The Old Gymnasium, on the site of the modern tuck-shop, the tuck-shop then being in what is now the Headmaster's gun-room, had neither roof nor heating, and in winter, which it usually was, the vaulting horse was covered with ice. Well do I remember . . .

TOASTMASTER. You will now hurriedly sing the School Song.

HEADMASTER. "*Dolor, dolor virum facit.
Vivat Alma . . .*"

OMNES. "Tell me the old, old story.
It's stew and rice again to-day . . ."

FINIS



"Makes yer blood boil, don't it, eb?"



"We have just two houses on our books, Sir, one is a desirable old barn of a place and the other a cosy poky little rabbit-hutch."

The Phoney Phleet

LV—H.M.S. "Bazooka".

THE battleship *Bazooka* had
A seaplane stowed amidships which
Was very old and very bad—
It shed components in the ditch.

So widely was this Swordfish known
That characters could not be found
To drive it. It remained unflown,
Un-airborne, wholly hangar-bound.

Amongst *Bazooka's* varied jobs
She once conveyed to Bongo Bay
Two high-ups, lordly ones, or nobs—
Air-Marshall Bragge and General Fray.

Three hundred miles from port, or more,
A signal came. Its terms were brief—
"Essential Fray proceed ashore
At once or sooner. Big White Chief."

That awesome name! They blenched, turned white.
Somehow they simply *must* obey.

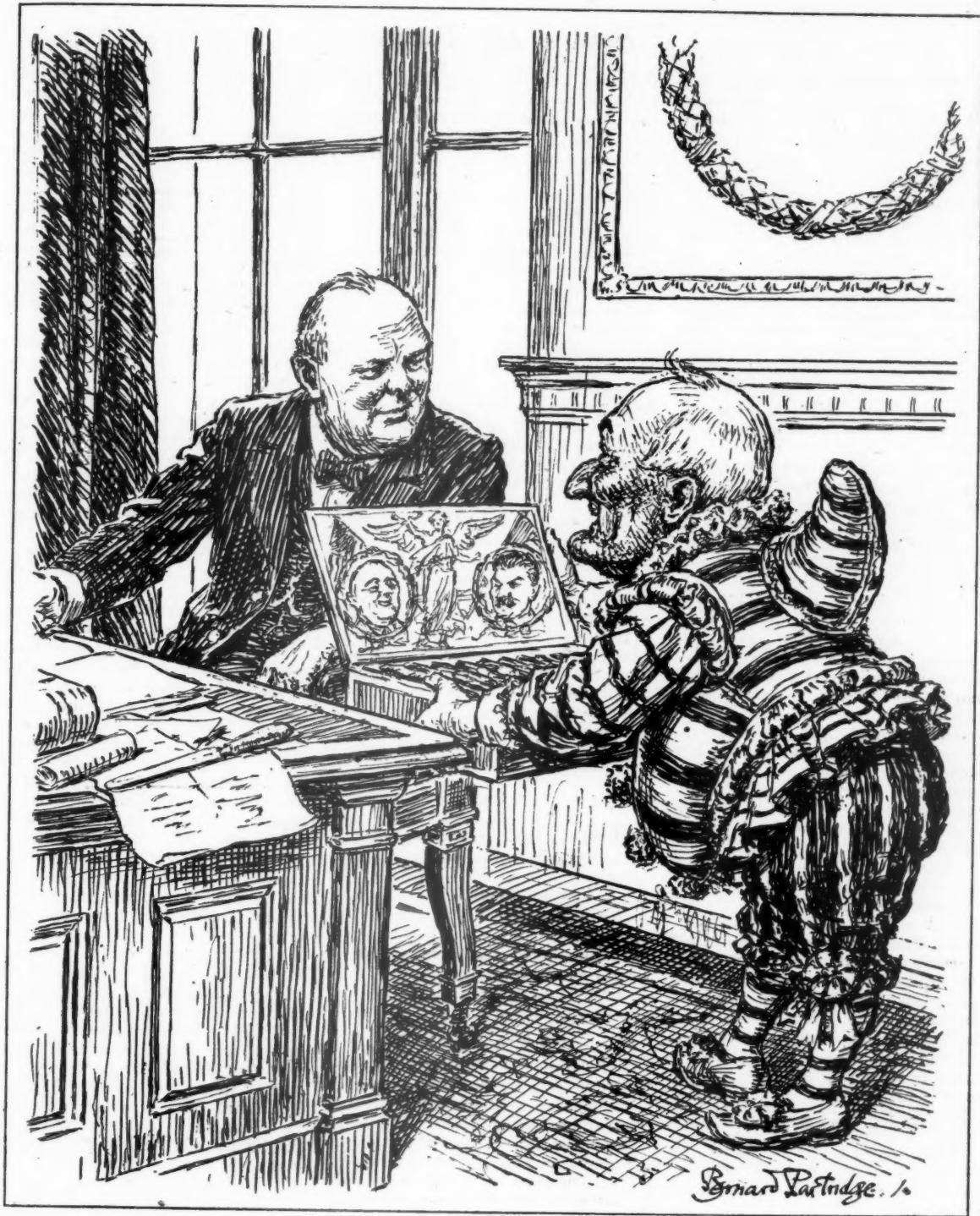
Bragge gulped. "I'll fly you in that kite.
This is the only, only way."

The miracle of course occurred.
Bragge did his pre-the-last-war stuff:
The string-bag functioned like a bird;
Land hove in sight—Great Bongo Bluff.

As Bragge came in prepared to land
The General raised blood-curdled squeals
And pointed with a trembling hand—
"You oaf!" he shouted. "Floats, not wheels!"

Air-Marshall Bragge was overcome.
"How absolutely *mad* of me!
How daft!" he cried. "How too, *too* dumb!
Seaplanes of course land on the sea."

He touched down several miles off shore
Thinking he'd leave no room for doubt.
The General, opening the door,
Said "Thanks, Air-Marshall" . . . and stepped out.



FLOR DE VICTORIA

"Many happy returns, Sir!"

Behind the Battle

MR. ALBERT HADDOCK has never been a keen motorist. He is not in favour of rapid motion across the earth's surface by any means. Offer him a trip in a V1 or 2 and he would decline it. You would have a job to persuade him to travel seventy miles in the slowest motor-car in the United Kingdom. But he has just motored seven hundred miles in Belgium, Holland—and Germany, in five days, in war-time. He has whizzed through the Siegfried Line, he has whizzed across the Rhine; he has whizzed into Germany. And after this experience he writes to fling a humble rose or two to those who are whizzing about Holland, Belgium, Germany and France, in war-time, in winter-time, all the time.

Drivers of the Allied Armies in Europe, Mr. Albert Haddock salutes you! What a job!

Haddock's notion of motoring is to proceed cautiously on a dry road at about 20 m.p.h. admiring the scenery and avoiding collisions by wide margins. The Allied Forces' notion (and Mr. Haddock quite sees the point) is to get everything everywhere as fast as possible; and since every road is full of massive lorries and vast armoured vehicles, collisions are seldom avoided by more than a centimetre. But, Haddock would add, they nearly always are avoided. During his seven hundred miles, though he had roughly 1,400 heart attacks, he beheld only one smash, and he touches his cap respectfully to the 10,000,000 drivers who whizzed past him or past whom he whizzed, and to his own drivers who whizzed him past and between the others, intact.

There was a great deal of that. Albert Haddock, who has absolutely no territorial ambitions, is quite content to amble along behind another vehicle for hours, even if it is a mere lorry or truck; provided there is no dust. But he did all his seven hundred miles in staff cars (or jeeps); and it seems to be a rule that no staff car must remain astern of any other vehicle for more than a few seconds. It loses caste if it does.

Haddock's car would come up astern of a convoy of thirty or forty slower-whizzing vehicles—engineering vehicles piled high with bulging loads, mountainous lorries full of P.B.I., or petrol, Red Cross vehicles, bulldozers, vehicles with huge cranes hanging out aft, inexplicable contraptions of metal that only the late Heath

Robinson could have thought of. "Ha, ha," says Mr. Albert Haddock thankfully, "we are stuck, we shall have a little repose"—observing that on the left-hand side of the road there whizzes towards him a ragged but seldom-ending procession of jeeps, self-propelled guns, "Ducks", "Crocodiles", "Pheasants", ten-ton lorries, bulldozers, three-ton lorries, Sherman Tanks, and what-not. Not a bit of it! Mr. Haddock's expert driver will brook no delay. He is going to pass that convoy, whatever whizzes towards him. This is not easy; for, being on this queer Continent of Europe, he is driving on the right-hand side of the road, and being in a British car, he is seated on the right-hand side of it. So that he cannot see what is coming towards him without leaning acrobatically over to the port side or steering out to port to see. But Sergeant X is not deterred. He tries a dart past as soon as he can. The apprehensive passenger, who can see more, indicates hastily that two large tanks on larger tank-carriers are approaching. Sergeant X withdraws reluctantly to starboard. But next time he will not be held back. He blows his imperious horn. The lorry ahead does not budge an inch. But the Sergeant takes the plunge and whizzes ahead. The road is wet and sloping. The notices say "Danger—Road slippery when wet!" The

off-wheels are on the hard wet *pavé*, the near-wheels are in a bog torn up by the tanks. Ahead is a ten-ton lorry approaching at about 400 miles an hour. (Sometimes there are tram-lines also to add to the simplicities, and a few Belgian or Dutch bicyclists—or German mines—on either side of the road.) Sergeant X cares for none of these things. He holds his swaying craft like a rock past the starboard lorry, misses the port lorry by a millimetre or two and is one up in the queue. (The port lorry, by the way, as it whizzed past, made a noise like about forty-three circular saws, which is not to Mr. Haddock's taste.)

This process is repeated, with hideous variations, some thirty or forty times, till the whole convoy has been artfully passed, and even the ranks of passengers can scarce forbear to cheer. Sergeant X then (for about two minutes) has a clear (though still slippery) road before him, and he celebrates his victory by imitating a V2. After some hundred miles of this life Mr. Haddock is still not sure whether he would rather have a clear road or be blocked by a convoy.

However, in this way he certainly saw the Continent. He whizzed about Brussels, that beautiful and charming town whose inhabitants are all so friendly—and astonished, by the way, to hear that England is "rationed also". He whizzed to Antwerp and all round the great docks, waiting for work. He saw doodle-bugs fall, or fly over, which made him a little homesick. He visited the foul Fort of Breendonk where the concentration camp was, and saw the hanging and the shooting place, and stood before the torture-cells and heard the awful tales.

One day he whizzed through Antwerp and all along the islands north of the Scheldt, almost to Flushing. It is a humbling thing to motor across a battlefield a few days after the soldiers have fought across it, and Mr. Haddock felt very humble as he crossed the narrow causeways between the mainland and Beveland, and between Beveland and Walcheren, where the Canadians, often up to the waist in water, fought so wonderfully well. Mr. Haddock, having seen the sad and flood-girt but delightful Middelburg, was determined to reach Flushing, but the last stage of the voyage was too much even for Sergeant X. The road being flooded the only course was by the towing-path, the

They That Go Down to the Sea in Ships

"**A**T this time such articles as you send are a genuine comfort to me."

Now more than ever before are we dependent for our livelihood upon the courage and steadfastness of our gallant crews "that go down to the sea in ships." You, by your generous gifts to the PUNCH COMFORTS FUND, can help to alleviate their sufferings, and to make their task less arduous. We rely on you because we know that, like them, you will not let us down. All donations will be gratefully received and acknowledged by Mr. Punch at PUNCH COMFORTS FUND, 10 Bouverie St., London, E.C.4.

Registered under the War Charities Act, 1940



"You ARE in luck, Henry! LAMPREYS for dinner to-day!"

high bank, heavily mined, on one side, and the canal on the other, and innumerable bicycling Belgians ahead, not to mention a few large ex-craters. Two miles from Flushing the largest and muddiest ex-crater persuaded even Sergeant X to turn. But that day Mr. Haddock whizzed one hundred and eighty miles.

The next day he whizzed another one hundred and eighty miles, now in a jeep, across the Siegfried Line and into Germany at Aachen. Jeep-riding, this weather, is the coldest form of transport known. Mr. Haddock was so cold that he did not realize he had been through the Siegfried Line till the following day. But at Aachen he was allowed to get out and walk, and he remembers a good deal about Aachen. Aachen is a terrible thing to remember. Coming out, on the outskirts, Mr. Haddock saw one house that looked almost like a house, and it seemed unnatural. But the chief thought in Mr. Haddock's mind as he thawed out at the end of the day was that a great many poor fellows have to do long jeep-rides every day.

On his last day, Mr. Albert Haddock had the honour to whizz across the

Rhine (feeling again very humble) by the Nijmegen Bridge. He also had the very great honour to meet some of the Canadians, who have come, conquering always, up the coast from Caen. He had intended to halt half-way over the Rhine and make a suitable salute to the well-known river. But shelling is done in those parts and the scheme was rightly voted down.

Mr. Albert Haddock, safe home in U.K., has been having confused dreams about land-transport, about the ruthless God of Supply and his devoted, undecorated servants, who, night and day, in every weather, whizz back and forth across the Continent, managing monsters and keeping millions alive, armed and equipped—men of skill, and daring, and endurance. Through these dreams there streams a strange procession of animals—the Duck, the Crocodile¹ and Alligator², the Pheasant³, the Buffalo⁴ and Kangaroo⁵, the Hedgehog⁶, the Scorpion⁷, the Staghound⁸ and the Snipe⁹. And bicyclists

— Belgian and Dutch—surely the bravest people in the world, pedalling manfully along in the wind and the rain, with monstrous masses of metal whizzing and roaring at them or past them in every corner of their countries. But there is one firm figure in all this whizzing and whirling scene, the head of a solid British (or American) driver, very cleanly shaved at the back, the head of a man, trained, tough, and tireless, finding his way in a strange country, getting no medals, but delivering the goods. A. P. H.

○ ○

**See this Film and Forget the Rest
of the War!**

"One is surprised, after seeing it, to find that the performance has taken over two and a half years. No greater compliment could be paid it."—*Coventry paper*.

○ ○

Bulldozers' Corner

"The British Second Army is biting its way forward into Germany. Our forces have pushed forward several villages deep into the Reich north of Aachen."

Daily paper.

¹ Flame-throwers. ² 17-pounder gun. ³ Amphibious tanks. ⁴ Armoured troop-carrier. ⁵ Mine-sweepers. ⁶ An armoured car. ⁷ A staff car.



"I was quite lost without it."

This Talking at Breakfast

HAVE you ever done anything brave, Uncle Bill?"

"Yes, Peter, I can safely say I am one of the bravest men alive."

"What did you do that was brave?"

"Well, Peter, I once dressed up as a hospital nurse and gave an address to two thousand people on 'Mothercraft.'"

"Why?"

"He was on a Rugger tour, and they bet him he wouldn't."

"Does Uncle Bill know you saved a boy from drowning, daddy?"

"Good heavens, has he been telling you that one again?"

"No, but I want him to."

"Well, I was there, Peter—I can tell that story too."

"Did you help?"

"No, Peter: Uncle Bill showed his usual genius for getting in the way."

"My recollection is that I came flashing up on the wing, shouting that I was *'with you.'*"

"Did you expect me to *pass* the boy to you sixty yards through the air?"

"And when you say 'flashing up,' Bill, I seem to remember you employing a rather laborious breast-stroke."

"Then I will say, with all modesty, that I made an attempt to be of service. Some lookers-on thought it a rather gallant one."

"Only because they assumed from your antics that you couldn't swim."

"Tell me about it, daddy."

"He will tell anybody about it for the price of a pint of beer."

"I was on holiday on the coast of France, Peter."

"Was mummy there too?"

"Mummy was the sole purpose of my being there."

"It was a family party, Peter, and daddy had tacked himself on."

"Was Carl Fisk there?"

"No, I am happy to say he was not."

"What happened?"

"We were all coming down to the beach one day when we saw a terrific

crowd on the water's edge, and a little way out to sea two heads bobbing in the water, so we stopped to look. And then a lot of people who could speak English came rushing up to ask if we could swim."

"So daddy said Yes, he could, Peter, and that is the *first* funny thing in the story."

"Were the men drowning?"

"One was a boy, and *he* was drowning, and the other was the bathing attendant, and he was trying to hold the boy up."

"Was daddy undressed?"

"Yes, I was in a bathing wrap; which I threw off, Peter, and plunged in."

"Not straight in, darling; you first gave me your glasses."

"Then you fell over a rock and cut your toe. Don't forget that, old boy; it makes the incident, I think, so much more stirring."

"Why couldn't the bathing man bring the boy in by himself, daddy?"

"Because he was very tired, Peter, and he had his boots on."

"How could you see that?"

"That is a very good question, darling. How *could* you see?"

"It is not surely a question of what I could see, but of why the man was tired."

"Did he have a coat on?"

"Yes, and thick trousers."

"And a hat?"

"Yes, Peter, I think *he* did."

"What was it like?"

"A blue one, darling, with a peak."

"What colour blue?"

"Oh, don't be a fool, Peter."

"He is not being a fool, darling, he simply wants to visualize the scene! It was a very good question."

"So did you swim out, daddy?"

"Yes, Peter, and I took the boy away from him."

"Was he crying?"

"He was unconscious."

"And what did the bathing man say?"

"He was too busy panting, to say anything; but when he saw that I was a very fine swimmer he was contented."

"It would improve the story, darling, (Peter is quite right) if he had at least said '*Aidez-moi.*'"

"As a matter of fact, when my feet touched ground and I could walk, he did say '*Vous avez terre?*'"

"What did that mean?"

"Had daddy run aground, darling?"

"What was Uncle Bill doing?"

"Divesting myself of my clothing, Peter."

"As far as I remember, Bill, you were lolling along the sands shouting out that you would arrive shortly."

"You see, darling, Uncle Bill was not really intending to bathe."

"I was emptying my pockets as fast as I could."

"I always thought the funniest thing about that was giving all your money to some strange man, then taking it back to count it."

"Was mummy going to bathe?"

"Daddy has already told you, darling, that was the sole purpose of his coming on the holiday."

"To bathe with mummy?"

"Certainly, and because I was not a spoil sport *I was not going to bathe.*"

"Another reason was that it was gin time at the Albion."

"So when you had saved the boy, daddy, what happened?"

"Everyone clapped daddy."

"And mummy ran up and put her arm through his and asked if he was quite all right."

"Not at all. I went purely to give him back his glasses."

"And who was the little boy?"

"He was the son of the local taxi-man, and we owed him a lot of money for hiring his taxi, so he called at our hotel to thank me for being so brave, and to say how often he had told the little boy not to go out so far, and of course he could not *think* now of accepting payment for his taxi at all."

"So what did *you* say?"

"I asked what he would have."

"And ordered a bottle of wine, darling."

"Then what?"

"Another bottle."

"And was the bathing man there?"

"Yes, *he* had brought the taxi-man round to see daddy."

"What did *he* have?"

"Cognac."

"Did you have to pay?"

"Certainly."

"What did mummy have?"

"Pernod."

"What did Uncle Bill have?"

"Gin and Dubonnet."

"And did you *still* pay?"

"Yes."

"Didn't Uncle Bill pay for anything?"

"No, Peter, he is not that kind of uncle."

"Daddy was the one who was trying to impress mummy!"

"As a matter of fact, darling, I told Uncle Bill that as *he* owed the taxi bill, and had been let off it, he ought to pay for something, so he took us out to an oyster feed."

"You did not have to tell me; it was my own idea."

"And did the bathing man come?"

"No, Peter, he did not like oysters."

"What did he like?"

"Cognac."

"So did he *have* some?"

"Yes, Peter, he had some every time he saw daddy *or* me the whole of the rest of the time we stayed in the place. In fact he waited round corners to say good morning or good afternoon or good night, and always he had more cognac."

"Why?"

"Because when brave men meet . . ."

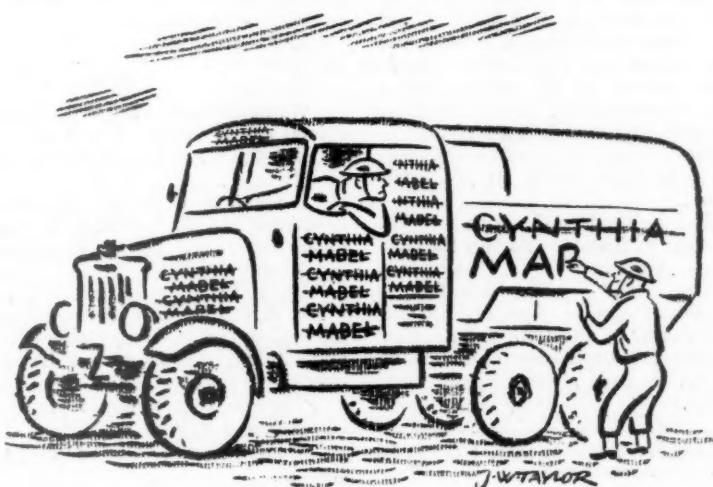
"And the bathing man thought daddy was very brave, darling."

"Well partly that, and partly he liked cognac."

"And is that why you married daddy, mummy?"

"Not altogether, darling, but I expect it was one reason."

"The other reason being that *she* got to like cognac too!"



The Twisters

"I SAW him to-day," said my agent over the telephone, "and fixed very good terms for your script."

"That's fine," I said.

"He says they've altered it a bit, but then they always do."

"Oh, well."

"And he wants you to be there to-night, because he's rehearsing the comics."

"Rehearsing the——?"

"The comics. Oh, and he's okayed your name to go on the programme."

"That's fine," I said.

"Seven o'clock, over the Peppodrome. Bye," said my agent.

"Bye," I said.

Perhaps I should explain that I had never seen my agent. I had only had him for three days. If it comes to that, I had never seen any comics—not close to, and certainly not being rehearsed by an impresario whose name leaps out at you from all the escalators in London.

Mr. X* shook me briefly by the hand. He did not look like a famous Man of the Theatre, but more like a stockbroker doing nicely on one of the northern exchanges. "So you are Mr. Bulawayo?" he said—or some such name; it wasn't a bad try—"I've got the boys through here."

As I set off after him down the deep-carpeted corridor he said that he liked my script, liked it very much. "Good," I said. A burst of music from under our feet reminded me that the cast of *Knock 'Em Cold* was working away on the stage below to put another thousand into Mr. X's pockets. "We've had to twist it a bit, here and there," he said, opening an expensive door—"but you'll see what you think. . . ." I followed him into a long room, with a green grand piano at one end and the two comics at the other. In the middle was a large grandfather's clock, made of canvas and ply-wood. I was pleased to see that; it was a piece of my imagination, brought to life by Mr. X. I felt excited.

"This is Mr. Er—the author." Mr. X's memory had done its best the time before. Now it gave up. "How's it coming, boys?" The two famous faces gave me smiles of genuine friendliness, almost of affection, but relapsed instantly into expressions of mourning.

"Not so bad, guv'nor," said Billy Vivian.

* I had better call him that; I expect he has very competent lawyers.

"Got to make it a bit Joey-Joey," said Arthur Dillway.

"Joey-Joey's all right," said Mr. X soothingly.

"Joey-Joey's all right," said Billy—"but it's not like something you can feel, is it?" The celebrated doleful eyes appealed to me for an author's opinion. I knew that face so well that it was hard to believe that it didn't know me from Adam.

"Well——," I said.

"Take that bit about the lodger," said Arthur—"you know, Billy, where I say, 'You never took a lodger'!—"

"Yes, I did," flashed Billy.

"Oh, you never!?"

"But I did!"

"But you couldn't!?"

"But I had to!?"

Mr. X said "Just a minute. You'll have to turn away there, Billy, or you'll kill the laugh."

"That's right, Billy," said Arthur—"You never took a lodger!?"

"Yes, I did."

"Oh, you never!?"

Mr. X's eyes travelled from one to the other as if he were watching a table-tennis match. When he had observed the effect of Billy turning away he whispered to me, "We've had to twist it a bit, you see." "Quite," I said, and stole a reassuring look at the grandfather's clock. That, at any rate, was mine, which was more than could be said for the passage about the lodger.

"I wonder," I said, "if I could see it from the beginning?"

"Sure, sure," said Mr. X, and began moving furniture. The two comics assisted him. I would have helped, but the chairs were being placed in positions unfamiliar to me.

"The lady secretary sits here," said Mr. X.

"The lady sec——?"

"We had to have a girl in it. There's a good gag to work. You'll see."

"But the scene is a private house," I said.

"We had to twist it a bit there," explained Mr. X, "to get in a gag about rationing. So we've made it the Ministry of Food."

"I see," I said.

Mr. X read the lady secretary's part himself, and when the gag (about Spam and V3) had been disposed of he came over to me near the fire.

"So you've come about the clock, cock??" said Billy.

"Yes. It seems to have come to a stop."

"It certainly has come to a stop, cock."

"Stop cock? You want somebody from the waterworks?"

Mr. X whispered, "He turns as if he's going out, see?"

"I see," I said. "What are they doing with the tea-things?"

"Tea-things?" said Mr. X—"Oh, yes, they work in the tea-party sketch here—there are some good bits in it."

I had still heard nothing that struck a chord of memory. My sketch had dealt with the efforts of a householder to repair his grandfather's clock. I glanced at the clock again. It was still there.

"My girl's a fan-dancer," Billy was saying, archly—"but she had an accident."

"No!?"

"Yes. She fell on her——"

I leant close to Mr. X's ear.

"When do they——?"

"Sh! There's a big laugh here."

"How did she get in??"

"She was taken in."

"And how did she get out??"

"She was cracked out."

"See?" said Mr. X—"and now they come to the scene where they show each other snapshots."

They showed each other snapshots. Here and there, about every half-page of script, I noticed a line of mine, horribly mutilated, skimmed over or thrown away.

I remembered Mr. X's letter asking me to cut my original script by two-thirds. "Isn't it going to run rather a long time?" I asked.

"Twelve minutes," said Mr. X, glancing at a slim gold watch—"they're just on the finish."

"Finish?" I said—"but what about repairing the clock? The whole point of my script was——"

"Listen," said Mr. X.

To my astonishment they spoke six consecutive lines of my own—the original finish to the sketch. Then they came up to us, mopping their foreheads and panting.

"What did you boys decide about the clock?" said Mr. X.

"Not very proply," said Billy, and Arthur shook his head.

"What about the bit where Billy got his head stuck in it?"

Billy ran to the clock and stuffed his head through a tear in its canvas back. "Ow!" he cried—"now I've got my head stuck in it. Help! Help!"

"And then I get him out," explained Arthur.

"Not very proppy," said Billy, coming back—"not as proppy as you'd think."

"Well," said Mr. X, turning to me—"perhaps Mr. Bollinger has some suggestions?"

The two comics turned an unexpectant gaze upon me.

"I don't think so," I said—"unless you made the clock into a studio-camera, made the setting a fashionable photographer's and did the whole sketch in basic English with Billy and Arthur in Boer War uniforms. That would give you a chance to work in some gags about emergency water tanks and the price of shoe-repairs—and Arthur could sing 'There'll Always Be An England,' while Billy tried on a demobilization suit."

"Does your uniform fit you?" said Billy.

"Perfect," flashed Arthur.

"You must be deformed," said Billy.

"There's an idea there," said Mr. X. "Would you try to get it down on paper?"

"You'd have to twist it a bit," I said.

"We could do that," said Mr. X, opening the door.

"I'm sure you could," I said.

And I bade them good-night.

I must ring up my agent to-morrow, about my name on the programme. I may have to twist it a bit. I may have to wrench it out of all recognition.

J. B. B.

o o

Letting On

IT was in an unguarded moment that I let on.

It was such a slap-up party too. Flowers on the table and the head waiter graciously pandering to our eagerness to be recognized. "We greeted him fervently by name.

The conversation soon reached a high level. We had had platitudes, the situation, suitable stories, adequate jokes; we had enjoyed reminiscences in which Noel figured or to which Myra would bear witness; we were told of difficulties on charitable committees, and compared the urgency of causes; we touched on politics. A new world had been guaranteed, progress confidently assured.

Beauty, we had just decided, was to be distributed to the masses. Good music was to be appreciated by all, the tunes of the moment were indeed deplorable, they were an insult to the aesthetic sense of the simple folk. Then it was I let on.



"I can't possibly pay my income tax—to whom should I apologize?"

"But it cheers me up," I said, "on a damp November day to hear the Bingo Banga Boys swinging it from a gramophone in the sixpenny stores."

There was silence. My hostess took the situation in hand.

"Dear lady," she said, leaning forward, "that is the kind of thing we are fighting."

So you see, you can't be too careful.

Never, for instance, let on that you are partial to spring onions or chewing-gum; never admit that you read the comic strips in the papers, that you like thrillers, drink tea at night, sleep

on a feather bed, bought your ear-rings off a barrow and your shoes secondhand; that you have been in a swing-boat and kissed in a cinema; that you like the seaside to have a pier and a Punch and Judy show; that you prefer buying a new hat to visiting the Victoria and Albert Museum and a circus to a course of Oxford Extension Lectures.

Never let on. That is to say, if you want to be asked again.

The fact that goods made of raw materials in short supply owing to war conditions are advertised in this paper should not be taken as an indication that they are necessarily available for export.



"Would you mind if I took your place in the queue
—I'm in a hurry!"

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Team Work

In Tyrannos (LINDSAY DRUMMOND, 16/-) is a collection of essays by German and Austrian writers who have been exiled by the Nazis and are at present in England. Although the book consists of fifteen individual contributions, it is, the editor explains, "the product of a common purpose and team work." Its theme is the struggle against tyranny waged by Germans during the last four centuries, from the Peasants' Revolt in 1525 to the abortive Workers' Revolution directed by Liebknecht at the beginning of 1919; tyranny at the beginning of this period being embodied in the Roman Catholic Church and the German territorial princes, and at the close in the alliance between bourgeois capitalism and the Generals and landed aristocracy. The two most interesting contributions are the study of Ulrich von Hutten, who combined something of Rabelais' humour with a great deal of Tom Paine's uncompromising courage, and the study of Karl Kraus, an Austrian journalist who throughout the last war assailed German and Austrian militarism with equal daring and wit. Long before Hitler appeared, Kraus hit off his particular kind of monomania in a world conqueror who exclaims "I should like to make myself fighting mad with myself, simply to see who is the stronger, Me or Me." It is a pity that Kraus, who was an individual not a mouth-piece of a collective outlook, did not live to contribute to this volume, which is written from the standpoint that resistance to tyranny implies a disinterested love of freedom. Among the lovers of freedom here celebrated are Hegel, who inspired Lenin and Mussolini, and who, when Napoleon rode by his window, perceived "the spirit of the history of the world," whatever that may mean; Karl Marx, whose temperament is revealed in "Burst forward then, ye women, with your raving rage and seize your tame men by their sloppy plaits and hang those scarecrows wherever you like . . . We shall only be saved by the guillotine and by the fury of women"; and Lassalle, whose desires were divided between women and power, which, as the champion

of the German workers, he was about to achieve when he fell in a duel over a woman. The Germans about whom it would, from the standpoint of anti-Nazi Germans, be salutary at the present time for English to be informed are not the resisters to tyranny (Hitler began his career in that character), but the poets and thinkers who have shown that it is possible for a German to be an individual and not a cog in a machine, Prussian or proletarian. H. K.

Time and Again

As history becomes increasingly anthropological and less humane, the historical novel—and especially the dialogue—becomes more difficult to write. Many historical novelists have abandoned a dialogue coloured by its period—possibly as more trouble than it is worth?—though this, if there is any question of a masterpiece, is a mistake. Miss JANE OLIVER, for instance, has written an historical novel covering four epochs, in modern idiom throughout: her heroine, who tells all four stories, being reborn (with members of her circle) in the Palestine of our Lord, in Arthurian Britain, in Scotland of the '45 and in contemporary London. Ignoring the Christian dogma that we have only "once to die, and after this the judgment" the author provides a certain amount of Christian atmosphere and Christian finale for a saga of the transmigration of souls. She also, for no particular reason, borrows, with acknowledgments, Francis Thompson's title *In No Strange Land* (COLLINS, 9/6). She exhibits episodic ingenuity, broad human interests and a taste for contemporary décor which exerts itself most effectively in the Edinburgh episode of Jacobite-bred maiden and Hanoverian dragoon. It is the more ambitious side of the historical novelist's rôle—what Schlegel called the "prophet with his face turned backwards"—that betrays her. H. P. E.

Jig-Saw Puzzle

In the course of a day's walk in Bulgaria you may meet men who call themselves Pomaks, Cumans, Gagauz, Bunyevaks or Safardis. In Rumania you may pass in succession through seven villages occupied by seven different races with nearly as many languages and religions. The whole of the Balkans is a mosaic of little bits of contending peoples, and the setting of the fragments in their comfortable places is very much our affair. World harmony or discord turns on it. The problem of Macedonia alone lengthened the last war, by bringing the Bulgarians to the help of the Turks, perhaps by as much as two years, and once again it has been no inconsiderable factor. So says Mr. BERNARD NEWMAN in *Balkan Background* (HALE, 15/-), a book which goes far beyond its title and can be recommended without stint. Every page brings its own picturesque or pathetic incident or detail or character—the wooden ploughs, the thorns across the door to catch vampires by their shrouds, the rousing welcome for American air-crews brought down over Ploesti, the Vancouver tram-driver coming home to be a village squire on his savings, the mother deciding the small boy must have new trousers and starting to collect the wool to spin the yarn, the vendettas, the woeful rivalries between Nazi-distracted patriots, the peasant population desiring nothing but to be left alone, the heart-searching beauty of Transylvanian valleys. Never was a warmer and more human panorama, but behind it all is the jig-saw puzzle of the splintered nationalities. Mr. NEWMAN's solution is federation, with local transfers of population, genuine financial help and—startlingly—possible reservation of Bessarabia as a national home for Jews. C. C. P.

By Tre, Pol and Pen

"In the days when education was not taken too solemnly, and when children had plenty of time to invent their own pleasures unwatched," four boys and two girls adorned the schoolmaster's house at Gorran. "Security," "community life," "culture"—all the vociferated headlines of to-day—came naturally to a large Cornish family whose father took his profession magnanimously and whose mother "conferred grace and comfort" on her flock. Lest anyone should suspect that Miss ANNE TRENEER has exerted any undue Celtic glamour in relating the delights of her childhood, it should be put on record that *School House in the Wind* (CAPE, 7/6) is handled with almost boyish sangfroid. Its high lights—and they are many—are the telling high lights of a low-toned canvas. Its poetry is the poetry of an honest perception subtly attuned to its circumstances. From her secluded old-fashioned youth the writer distilled a universal art of living. "The secret of a happy life is to do the right things at the right age." And she carries the childish gusto for ritual—the ritual of the seasons, of seasonable food and of fairy-tales—to its Christian conclusion. "Joy seems to decline as the religious motive recedes. Mere conviviality is not the life of the spirit."

H. P. E.

Caroline Fox

Mr. WILSON HARRIS has written a delightful biography of *Caroline Fox* (CONSTABLE, 15/-), drawing his material from her Journal, which was published in 1882, eleven years after her death, and has not been reprinted since 1883. Caroline belonged to a well-known Quaker family in Falmouth, described by Carlyle in his life of John Sterling as "persons of cultivated opulent habits, and joining to the fine purities and pieties of their sect a reverence for human intelligence in all kinds . . . truly amiable all, after their sort." Apart from an attack by a bull, most vividly though calmly narrated in her Journal, nothing externally exciting happened to Caroline in the fifty-two years of her life; and as her Journal was severely edited before publication her more intimate thoughts and feelings are not on record. She was never married, and though Mr. WILSON HARRIS establishes beyond reasonable doubt that Sterling proposed to her, there is no written evidence of how deeply she was affected by his death. It is therefore in her sensitive shrewd impressions of the famous people she knew that the chief interest of her biography resides. There is Hartley Coleridge whose "vivid face sparkled in the shadow of a large straw hat," and who complained that Wordsworth was a most unpleasant companion on a tour, from his constant fear of being cheated. There is Wordsworth himself—"He evidently loves the monologue style of conversation." There is Tennyson who "has a perfect horror of being lionized (so) we left him very much to himself for a while, till he took the initiative and came forth." And there is Carlyle "looking dusky and aggrieved at having to live in such a generation."

H. K.

As the Wheels Went Round

Enter Two Musicians (CHAPMAN AND HALL, 8/6), by Miss KITTY BARNE, begins at a railway station and ends in lovers meeting. It is just the sort of book we need at the present time, for the author writes naturally about pleasant people, though some of them can be very provoking. The book is about a composer-conductor, *Mark*, his pianist wife, their secretary, a nice little girl (*Sukey*), a nice sailor (*Robin*), an extremely tiresome and delightful grandfather

and a few other people. *Mark* hires a converted windmill near *Sukey's* home because he needs peace and quiet for a time. The mill did not provide it, for the "sweeps" had been left in place so that at first he was maddened by "the vacillating idiocy of the wind, the shilly-shallying of the sweeps," though later he was beguiled by it. *Sukey* meets him. At first she is just a hero-worshipper, but later becomes, like the mill, an inspiration. Here the book might have gone badly wrong, but Miss BARNE pulls everything into shape at the right moment, though she never allows the machinery to be evident. Her book will delight ordinary readers as much as the musical, for though music pervades it like a charm she is never consequential about it.

B. E. B.

Mistress Prue's Tale

An amazing thing about novelists is the trouble they will take to tell a tale in the first person which would have gained immensely by being left to their own chartered omniscience. *Folly's End* (HUTCHINSON, 10/6), by Miss DORIS LESLIE, is a case in point. Her heroine, *Prudence*, as a grandmother writes the history of her young days, and we read with much less sympathy than if we had merely seen her, herself, instead of seeing through her. *Prue's* Cavalier father, marries her to his ward, heir and cousin while they are still boy and girl as a means of providing for her future. A study of the child marriages of Tudor and Stuart times might have made an interesting theme for a novel, but Miss LESLIE has not concentrated on that, and the fact that there is a perfectly good great-aunt available all the time, first sketched as poverty-stricken but turning out on closer inspection to be quite well-placed, who would have given *Prue* a home, robs her marriage of its inevitability. It proves to be through her husband's misfortune a marriage in name only and another ward of her father's soon finds himself in love with her; there are all those differences in beliefs and loyalties which must have made family life often very trying in Commonwealth and Restoration times, and we have scenes at Whitehall, the Plague and the Great Fire to make up good measure in a story that will please readers whose appetite for settings of that period is unjaded.

B. E. S.





"I'll bet you a pound you haven't reserved ME a nice plump turkey for Christmas."

Something for the Psychologist

DO you mind, dear reader, if I am rather more serious than usual this week? I want to tell you a sad story—a story of inglorious failure. And I want neither smiles nor laughter—only sympathy.

I think it was Mandrail ("Lodestone" Mandrail, that is) who first set me thinking about the duration of dreams. In his book *Membrane of the Mind* he devotes one long chapter to an analysis of the old yarn about the man who fell asleep in church and dreamed that he was awaiting death on the guillotine . . . (Stop me if you've heard it; this sentence is getting out of hand.) Well, Mandrail maintained that the yarn *was* plausible. I forgot why exactly, but it was something to do with the man's baldness and the

dismay of the *tricoteuses* with their busy scissors. Or is that another story altogether? It matters little.

In my dream there was a doodle raid. I heard the sirens very clearly—ours and Enderleigh's. I looked up at the sky and walked on. The street was almost deserted. A postman, an insurance agent (I think) and a milk-maid passed me. I reached the station just in time to miss the train. Then the All Clear sounded.

I am sorry to be so tedious, but painful accuracy is essential in this matter. You see, I was walking throughout my dream—at my usual pace and over a measured and very familiar track. That journey always takes me fourteen minutes . . .

And that was precisely the duration of

the real raid that took place on the night of my dream.

I checked the times carefully. The fire-watchers in three different blocks gave 11.02 P.M. for the Alert and 11.16 P.M. for the All Clear.

When the first shock of amazement had passed I began to realize the significance of my discovery. But a single equation of dream time and standard time could prove nothing conclusively. An unbroken series of such coincidences would have to be recorded before the theory—that the apparent duration of a dream to a dreamer is equal to its actual running-time—could be established.

Three nights later the Alert sounded again. In my dream I was writing an article. It was the usual

brilliant stuff hacked out with unerring skill. I had barely completed the last fair copy when the raid ended. Once again the fire-watchers' records proved my thesis. The raid had lasted five hours and fifty minutes—precisely the time it takes me to concoct an article like this.

I was thrilled. It was clear that I was on the threshold of something momentous.

A week passed and there were no raids. A month passed—a terrible month with raids so frequent that the fire-watchers' reports were completely unreliable. Another month, a month of great promise with the raids more scattered and measurable—but a

month of bitter disappointment and insomnia.

It was about a fortnight ago that I recovered my old form. I heard the siren quite clearly in my sleep. The waiter set a plate before me and I ate steadily and with great enjoyment. Then as I drained a heavy pewter tankard of iced lager the All Clear sounded.

That raid, I discovered, lasted forty-five minutes, but I was unable, for obvious reasons, to check my performance with the immense porterhouse steak and fried eggs. It was very disappointing.

There have been raids every night since then and during each one I have

eaten (in my dreams) great quantities of steak and fried eggs. My dream mind had become single-track. I have written to the Ministry of Food, the Society of Psychologists, the Chicago Tribune and U.N.R.R.A.—pleading for facilities to continue my researches. They have all turned me empty away.

Only the Society of Psychologists seemed really interested in the great experiment. They have offered to supply me with viands and graph-paper as soon as the war ends. But when the war does end I doubt very much whether the Ministry of Home Security will agree to sound the sirens twice nightly—even though the interests of science are at stake.

Our War-Time Query Corner

Ask Evangeline!

Q. It makes it awkward when those sharing your home have quite different ideas as to where things go. A sheet-iron roller named Mrs. Dropwort, now billeted with me, puts away china and cutlery after washing up in such odd places that it is sometimes only after prolonged difficulty that I am able to lay for the next meal. Indeed not two evenings ago I had the embarrassing experience of entertaining an archdeacon to a supper of Julienne, beef fillets à la Pompadour and Balmoral tartlets which he ate with a discoloured teaspoon, a two-pronged carving fork and the potato knife, I myself making shift with an iron basting ladle. It turned out that Mrs. Dropwort had put away everything else in a biscuit tin similar to the one in which she keeps her plate at home.

WINTERGREEN CHESTMONDHALGH
(Mrs.).

A. Could you not good-humouredly turn the affair into a kind of game? The next time you plan to go out yourself, say rouguishly to Mrs. Dropwort, "I bet you won't find where I've put the spoons!" As you are more familiar with the terrain than she is, maybe a month or so will find her throwing out feelers for a truce.

* * * * *

Q. I don't know why it is, but throughout my two and a half years as special constable I have never managed to find anybody doing anything. Personally I'd be quite happy just trying door-handles, flashing torches down culs-de-sac, etc., but all

the other fellows seem to have quite a bookful of little charges and I don't like the way the sergeant looks at me when I never have anything to report like the others. What would you do?

CYRIL POSEY (Mr.).

A. There is a type of noble nature that acts unconsciously as a neutralizing force where evil is concerned, and yours is clearly of this type, a point difficult of appreciation by grosser spirits, of whom your sergeant may well be one. As to a means of dissipating this laughably erroneous impression of laxity—with the dim-out succeeding the black-out, I am afraid there are going to be even fewer facilities for fault-finding in the future, so can only suggest that you try getting people to transfer their cars from one side of the road to another (a good opening move for a bit of back-answering out of which you might make something) or, supposing your beat to lie in a district devoid of motor traffic, try getting the people themselves to move, in particular those loafers who look least amenable to suggestion. Hover a little, pass and repass with a somewhat severe stare, then remind your quarry that if there is any standing about to be done, you are the person best qualified to do it. That ought to start something.

* * * * *

Q. It seems a bit thick for a young lad like our Oscar as has taken three years being learned what they now call "stripping and reassembling the heavy Browning" to be told it's no good him being put on to the next

course as he mightn't be able to make it before the third world-war. Though not as quick as some, when Oscar's got a thing he's got it, if you know what I mean, so no wonder he says his old job of hole-punching in bicycle mud-guards won't seem the same after tasting life like he has, especially after that last time when it suddenly came to him what they'd meant he had to do with his Browning, and the C.O. went up to him and said, "Nice work, Willie" (of course his name is really Oscar), also the boys stood him a fish-and-chip tea. He says his post-war dream is guns mixed up with push-bikes, so what had he better go in for?

INDIGNANT FATHER.

A. After a *succès fou* like that I can understand how perforated mud-guards will have lost their allure, so would suggest a trick-cycling career, then he can strip and reassemble in the saddle.

* * * * *

Q. I do so hope we are not going back after the war to all the old problems of rubbish disposal. In this district it was forbidden to put anything into one's ash-bin other than ashes. We, as a family, managed to dispose of our edible rubbish to the pigs at the "Red Lion," but this still left us with our tins. We never seemed able to get a straightforward answer when we consulted neighbours as to what they did with theirs, though the landlord wrote that it was the custom to dig into the garden any refuse that could not be put into the bin, as it would nourish the soil. It seemed odd to us at the time that

quite empty soup or sardine tins should contain nourishing properties, but of course we do not profess to be experts in horticultural matters. Anyhow, our subsoil was very soon just one mass of tins, and I cannot help thinking that this might have been partly responsible for our lack of success in cultivating spring onions for victory. How did others dispose of their tins in pre-war days? CONSCIENTIOUS.

A. I believe a great many saved them up and then made an excursion to one of the lesser-known beauty-spots and there dumped them. Indeed I can think of a number of lonely little Cornish coves to which salvage-depositors from all over the kingdom must have been in the habit of motoring to throw away their old bicycle handle-bars, maimed kettles, discarded frying-pans, perambulator spare parts, etc., for in those days there were no E.W.S. tanks. Maybe after the war motor-coach firms will run (for those without cars) similar excursions in vehicles attached to something after the style of a trailer, in which patrons' salvage oddments can be carried to avoid overstraining the usual luggage racks.

* * * * *

Q. Despite the fact that I was holding a first-class railway ticket I made the journey from Carlisle to Crewe last week standing in the corridor. It makes one feel that civilization is at an end when things like this can happen.

C. V. KNIGHTLY-UPWARD.

A. If it was a portion of first-class corridor in which you were standing I do not see that there is any cause for complaint; in fact you were fortunate to have a hand free to hold your ticket in the circumstances.

* * * * *

Q. A week or so before Auntie was blitzed in 1941 she burrowed under the floor of her Anderson shelter and hid away a metal box containing £500 in currency notes, a steel foot-warmer, once the property of Lord Tennyson, and the deeds of the family grave. As neither Auntie nor I have been well lately we felt we would like to have possession of this box, so made a special trip up to

town to retrieve it. You may imagine our indignation on discovering that the whole site had been levelled, concreted over and turned into a car-park serving a block of Government offices. How can we get at our things?

LOBELIA YOUNGHUSBAND (Miss).

A. As I do not suppose for a moment that you will be allowed to break up acres of governmental concrete hunting for your property, I would first borrow, purchase, or otherwise obtain possession of a mine-detector, then disguise Auntie as some lesser Ministerial dignitary, and park her on the site in question in a capacious bath-chair with the instrument concealed beneath the rug. Here she watches her chance, and, when the coast is clear, nips out of her chair and gets busy with the detector. The position of your box having been located, the rest is child's play. You simply rent some dwelling in the vicinity, work out a plan of your route and commence tunnelling.

* * * * *

Q. My brother and I, both fully qualified piano-tuners and wood-wind repairers, are being made uncomfortable by innuendo from our mobile help. When dusting the other day she gave Mother's old whatnot such a scornful look and said that in her friend Doris's place things were very different. Everything as had to be done was put in a pool and Doris did just any little job she fancied. Her employers were also in the habit of reversing

the letters of her name and calling her "Sirod," as they thought it more—"matey" I believe is the word. Our own domestic being registered under the name of Chloe May Herring, I think it would look foolish to go about addressing the girl as Eolice Yam, while as to this reshuffling of duties, I am afraid I see nothing to be gained by my brother and I taking over the beds and floors whilst Chloe plays havoc with the tuning-fork.

(Mr.) ELLIS RAISIN.

A. There are few occupations which do not gain from an infusion of new blood; thus, until the experiment has been tried you cannot know for certain what fresh vision Miss Herring may bring to bear upon the oboes, harmonicas, etc., awaiting repair in your work-room. I might quote in evidence the case of the Pottingham family in a flat adjoining mine. The authorities having at last utilized the services of the breadwinner in a more confined sphere, the attaché-case has been taken over by Mrs. P., and it is understood that she intends also to assume the trousers during her term of office. The post of general contriver of the commissariat, thus left vacant, devolves upon Grandpa Pottingham, who, although making heavy weather of his work, still has it at the time of going to press. Rumour also has it that a Mrs. Prawn, late daily help, hands over the scrubbing-brush to Great-Uncle Pottingham, another to make a come-back in the household arena, which leaves the family, for the first time in its history, without a radio-twiddler. A suggestion from opposition neighbours that this post might well be left vacant has been received with approval in most quarters.

○ ○

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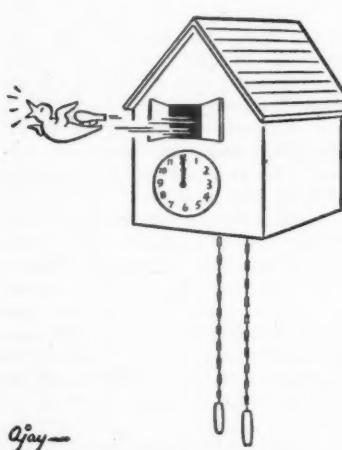
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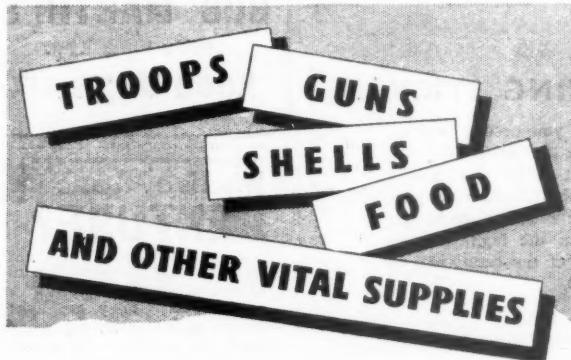


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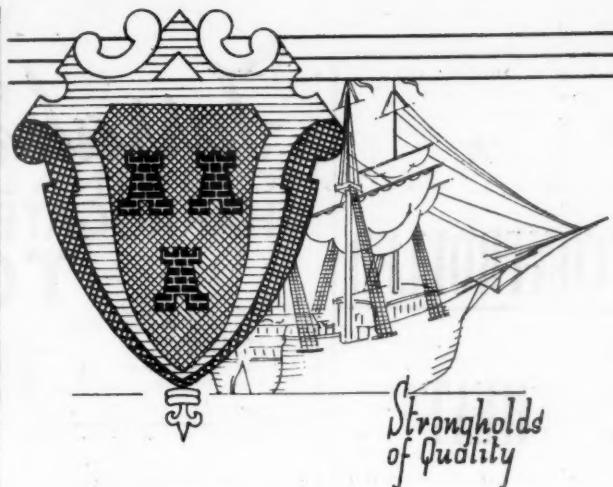
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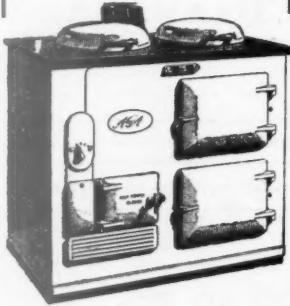
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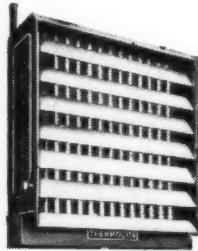
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*Mondy's child is fair of face
Tuesday's child is full of grace
Wednesday's child is full of woe
Thursday's child has far to go
Friday's child is loving and giving
Saturday's child works hard for his living
But the child that is born on the Sabbath day
Is bonny and blithe and good and gay.*

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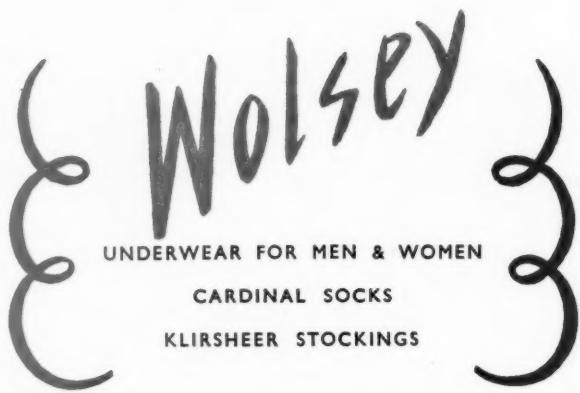
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